

THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1888.

Cycling on the Sidewalks.

The rights of cyclists to the use of the sidewalk is no longer a matter for discussion. The decision of Judge Depue last Winter and the recent action of the Legislature has settled the status of the bicycle—it is a carriage. Wherever it is proper to take a carriage it is proper to ride a bicycle.

The settlement of the legal status of the bicycle has not, however, taken it out of Township politics. Many cyclists (all the more sensible ones) admitted from the first, that they had no right upon the sidewalks. In fact, they realized that their demand for the same rights upon the highways, enjoyed by occupants of carriages, was put in great jeopardy, by the contention that they were in place upon the sidewalks. It was plain to them that if the bicycle was a carriage, within the meaning of the law, it had the rights of carriages in spite of the cranky action of certain local officials; and on the contrary if it were in place upon the sidewalks, it was absurd to expect it to be recognized as a carriage, which never would be allowed out of the roadway.

These same conservative cyclists, while recognizing the fact that they had no proper right to the use of the sidewalks, contend that they might be allowed to use them in certain places and under certain restrictions, without the least possible danger or inconvenience to the general public. The CITIZEN has always resisted the arrogant and inconsiderate demand, that cyclists should be regarded as everywhere and everywhere regardless of the safety and convenience of people on foot. It has maintained that the bicycle upon the frequented sidewalks, and upon any sidewalk, running at a high rate of speed, was an unmitigated nuisance; but on the other hand it has likewise maintained from the beginning of this discussion that the cyclist might be granted certain privileges with regard to sidewalks, as a matter of good feeling, leaving rights altogether out of account.

What privileges, if any, shall be granted to cyclists, is a question which the Township Committee and the citizens at large, will soon be called on to consider. If we are well informed the conservative element among the cyclists will urge upon the township committee the advisability of allowing them a certain use of the sidewalks. We think the matter worthy of the most careful consideration by the committee. The rights of the public should not be sacrificed on the one hand, and on the other, a stolid stand upon mere rights regardless of good fellowship would be swinish.

We would suggest as a plan which ought to give general satisfaction to all parties concerned, the following: 1st, that the bicycle be absolutely forbidden upon certain much traveled sidewalks; 2d, that it should be absolutely forbidden upon all sidewalks on the macadamized streets; 3d, that the speed should be limited to, say five miles an hour; 4th, that the sidewalk should always be yielded to the pedestrian the cyclist dismounting if necessary. 5th, that a lantern should always be carried on the wheel in the night time. Other regulations will probably suggest themselves either to the committee or the cyclists when the matter comes up for consideration.

A prompt and temperate discussion of this matter will save much unpleasant and unprofitable debate in the future, to say nothing of much useless hard feeling.

Let the cyclists appoint some level headed members of their fraternity to bring their side of the question before the township committee. We have little doubt they will meet with a most friendly reception. In the mean time it would be well to remember that there is an ordinance absolutely prohibiting bicycle riding on any sidewalk.

Town Committee.

The trustees of the First Presbyterian Church and the property owners along the line of Park Place, have petitioned the Town Committee to macadamize that street from Liberty street to Beach street.

The petition of the D. L. & W. R. R. requesting the privilege of raising the Ridgewood avenue bridge, was the subject of considerable discussion Wednesday night. The question was raised as to whether the Township had the power to grant such privilege, the bridge being a county structure. The alterations in the roadway necessitated by the change was recognized as a serious question. It was decided to refer the petition to the Town Counsel.

Francis M. Eppley was present on Wednesday evening in the interest of the new Street Railway. Mr. Eppley represented himself as being all ready to go ahead with the work and only waited the action of the Committee with regard to the grading of Prospect street, the establishing of boundary lines on Glenwood avenue and the raising of the track of the Essex Passenger Railway on Bloomfield avenue. The grading of Prospect street was referred to the Road Committee. In the matter of establishing boundary lines on Glenwood avenue, Engineer Reimer was instructed to consult with Town Counsel. The Town Clerk was instructed to notify the Essex Passenger Railway Company to raise its track on Bloomfield avenue, to conform to the grade of that thoroughfare. The question involved in establishing boundary lines on Glenwood avenue is a serious one. The surveyors of highways who originally laid out the road made it a 60 foot road. Commissioners appointed in 1873 laid it out as a 66 foot road. A great deal of the property and several buildings have been made to conform to the 60 foot line. Before laying the track of the Street Railway it is necessary that the question be definitely settled.

On Wednesday evening the Town Committee room and the corridor leading to it was crowded with members of the Fire Department and their friends, interested in political appointments, together with large delegations from Myrtle and Willow streets. The last mentioned delegations were present for the purpose of making vigorous protest against the condition of the above mentioned streets. The business of the Committee was of such a character that these gentlemen got tired waiting for an opportunity to give vent to their indignation, and retired in disgust. The police force was organized in a manner apparently satisfactory to the aspirants for membership. The whole legally elected constabulary, consisting of Messrs. James Foster, John V. Smith, George M. Cadmus, Theodore Harvey and Benjamin F. Baldwin, were raised to the dignity of "special police," the Police Committee to assign them to duty at their own discretion.

The important event of the evening and the one in which the greatest interest was manifested was the appointment of a Fire Marshal. Mr. Freeman, Chairman of the Fire Committee, presented the name of F. Howell Johnson. The Chairman called for further nominations. After some hesitancy the name of A. J. Marsh was presented by Mr. Farrand. A vote was taken on the first mentioned name which resulted in Mr. Johnson's election. Mr. Johnson has served the Department in the capacity of First Assistant Engineer and his friends feel highly gratified with his promotion.

Mr. Gustave Bruett scored a victory over the Committee. He had long contended that he was entitled to compensation for extra work done on Broad and Benson streets last summer. He has made several ineffectual attempts to have the bill paid, but was put off, laid over, and referred until he became desperate. A letter from Surveyor Reimer, accompanying his bill on Wednesday night, settled the matter and the bill was ordered paid.

A petition was received from residents of Belleville avenue, asking that gas lamps be placed on that street as far as the Belleville line. It was referred to the Gas Committee.

A communication from Ex-Committee-man Frank S. Benson directed the attention of the Committee to the uncompleted main on Highland avenue, and to several uncompleted sidewalk jobs.

Benjamin F. Baldwin's disputed bill for services as policeman on election day was again presented, properly certified. It was ordered paid.

C. E. McDowell's bill for the macadamizing of Ridgewood avenue from Bloomfield avenue to the railroad bridge was presented. The Chairman of the Road Committee stated that he had not inspected the work yet. Mr. McDowell was given an order on account.

A petition for a flag sidewalk on the east side of Bloomfield avenue between Liberty and Park streets, was referred to the Sidewalk Committee for correction.

The Sidewalk Committee was authorized to obtain blank formulas to be used by petitioners for flag sidewalks. These blanks when properly filled out are designed to facilitate the collection of the petitioners share of the expense incurred in laying flag sidewalks.

Robert Williams was compensated for work done on sidewalks in Morris Place.

Francis Law, owner of the building occupied by Active Hose Company, gave notice that after May 1st the rent of that building would be \$10 per month. Referred to Fire Committee.

The usual batch of bills chargeable to the poor account was ordered paid, also Fire and Police Department expenses.

The Weekly Evening Post.

The New York Evening Post will begin, on the third of May, to issue a weekly edition, having for its principal aim, the promotion of Revenue Reform, which has become the paramount issue in national politics. The existence of an actual surplus in the treasury estimated to reach \$140,000,000 on the 30th of June, 1888, and the further increase thereof under present laws, are a menace to all business interests, and a direct incentive to wastefulness and corruption in the appropriations of public money. The attention of the people having been strongly drawn to this subject by the President in his last annual message, the need of information and popular enlightenment on questions of revenue and taxation has been increasingly felt in all parts of the country.

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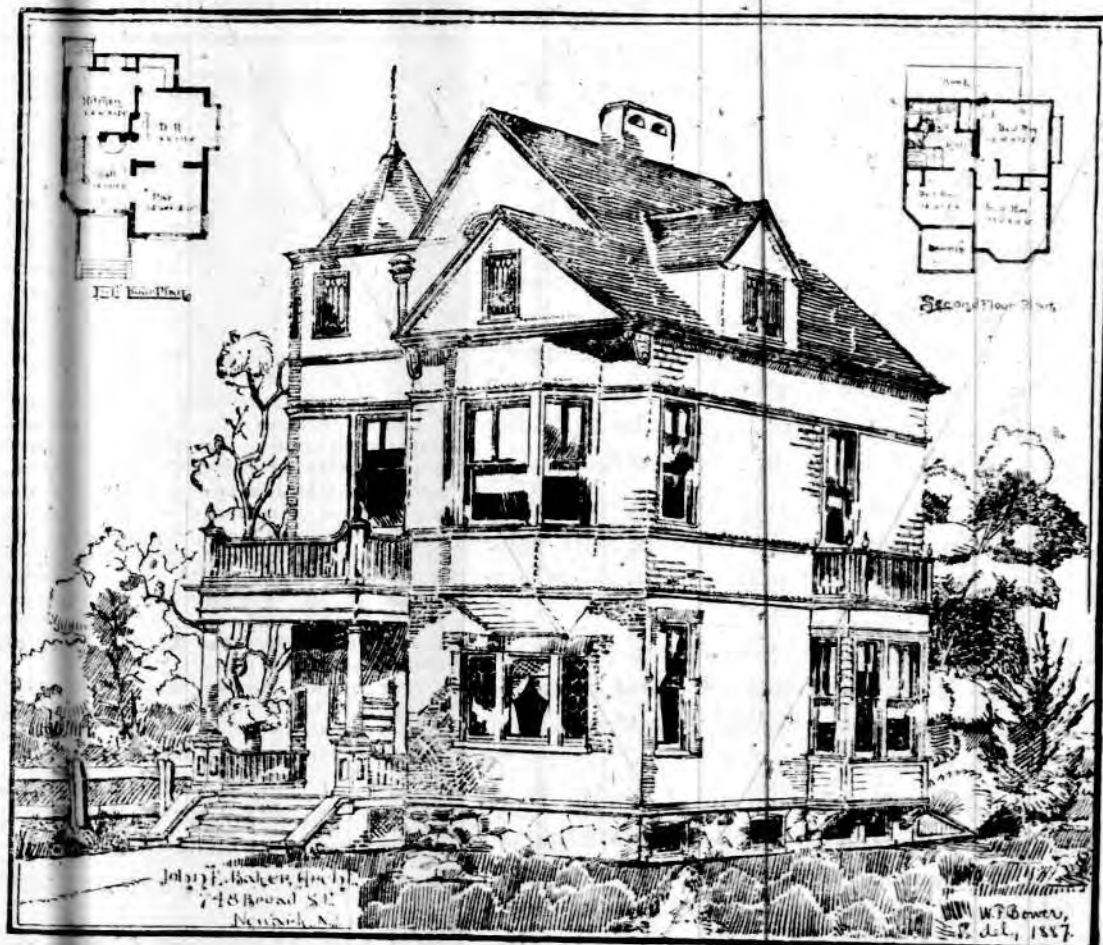
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